

REMARKS


Claims 51-65 are pending in the present application. In the Office Action, claims 51-52, 54-57, 59-62, and 64-65 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Flyntz (U.S. Patent No. 6,389,542). Claims 53, 58, and 63 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Flyntz in view of Angelo (U.S. Patent No. 5,949,882). Submitted herewith are the declarations under 37 C.F.R. § 1.131 of the named inventor, Dale E. Gulick, and of the undersigned agent that recite facts that establish that the Flyntz patent is not prior art to the present application.

More particularly, the declarations establish that, prior to May 3, 2000, the filing date of the Flyntz patent, the invention disclosed in the pending application was conceived and that all parties involved in preparing and filing the patent application with the United States Patent and Trademark Office were diligent. Accordingly, the Flyntz patent is not prior art to the present application.

For the aforementioned reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all claims pending in the present application are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (713) 934-4052 with any questions, comments or suggestions relating to the referenced patent application.

Respectfully submitted,

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